

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 20th. day of Jan., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5017 of January 27, 1983

National Day of Prayer, 1983

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Prayer is the mainspring of the American spirit, a fundamental tenet of our people since before the Republic was founded. A year before the Declaration of Independence, in 1775, the Continental Congress proclaimed the first National Day of Prayer as the initial positive action they asked of every colonist.

Two hundred years ago in 1783, the Treaty of Paris officially ended the long, weary Revolutionary War during which a National Day of Prayer had been proclaimed every spring for eight years. When peace came the National Day of Prayer was forgotten. For almost half a century, as the Nation grew in power and wealth, we put aside this deepest expression of American belief—our national dependence on the Providence of God.

It took the tragedy of the Civil War to restore a National Day of Prayer. As Abraham Lincoln said, "Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us."

Revived as an annual observance by Congress in 1952, the National Day of Prayer has become a great unifying force for our citizens who come from all the great religions of the world. Prayer unites people. This common expression of reverence heals and brings us together as a Nation and we pray it may one day bring renewed respect for God to all the peoples of the world. From General Washington's struggle at Valley Forge to the present, this Nation has fervently sought and received divine guidance as it pursued the course of history. This occasion provides our Nation with an opportunity to further recognize the source of our blessings, and to seek His help for the challenges we face today and in the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Thursday, May 5, 1983, National Day of Prayer. I call upon every citizen of this great Nation to gather together on that day in homes and places of worship to pray, each after his or her own manner, for unity of the hearts of all mankind.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 27th day of Jan., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

RONALD REAGAN